PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

UNION LEAGUE OF PHILADELPHIA,

REGARDING

THE ASSASSINATION

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

PHILADELPHIA:
HENRY B. ASHMEAD, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER,
Nos. 1102 and 1104 Sansom Street.
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PROCEEDINGS.

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

At a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Union League of Philadelphia, held April 15, 1865, immediately after information had been received of the murder of the President of the United States, Mr. J. Gillingham Fell, President, called the meeting to order in the following terms:

Gentlemen:—I have called you together for the purpose of announcing officially the awful calamity which has befallen the nation in the assassination of its Chief Magistrate. At this critical period, when we have so much need of his ability, disciplined judgment and patriotism, we are overwhelmed by the suddenness and terrible circumstances of his death. We stand in wonder at the Providence of God, and are made to know that his ways are not our ways. As the mind reverts to his dealings with his people in times past, its thoughts fall naturally upon the history of the great leader of Israel who, after conducting his children through their protracted perils, breathed his last on the brink of the Promised Land. We mourn our leader with as sincere a sorrow; but we know that

the same God who sustained the Hebrews still lives, and has placed in the hands of our people the preservation of a great nation. Therefore while we bow our heads in deep submission, let us address ourselves with energy to the responsibilities thus suddenly thrust upon us. To maintain order, obedience to the laws and respect for the constituted authorities is the immediate duty of every citizen.

On motion of Mr. Morton McMichael, the following Preamble and Resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, It has pleased Almighty God, in his inscrutable wisdom, to permit our beloved Chief Magistrate, Abraham Lincoln, to be removed by the hands of an assassin from the sphere of duty which he filled with so much honor to himself and so much profit to the nation; and,

Whereas, by this catastrophe the administration of the National Government has suddenly and most unexpectedly devolved on Andrew Johnson, the chosen Vice-President of the people; and,

Whereas, This Board feel, in this first hour since the knowledge of this great change has reached it, the importance of conveying to the new President assurances of the aid which the body it represents, in common with all loyal citizens, will render him in his trying situation; therefore be it

Resolved. That the Union League of Philadelphia have the highest confidence in the patriotism, integrity and ability of Andrew Johnson, now by the providence of God, President of the United States, and will give to him in the discharge of the vast responsibilities devolved upon him, the same zealous support which it has always given to his lamented predecessor.

Resolved. That the Secretary be requested to transmit to the President of the United States the Gold Medal of the League, as a proof of its esteem for his merits as a citizen, and its recognition of his claim as the first officer of the Republic.

On motion of Mr. Horace Binney, Jr., it was

Resolved. That the members of the Union League be requested to assemble at Concert Hall, on Monday the 17th instant, at 12 M., to take such action as they may deem necessary in view of the awful calamity which has just befallen the nation.

Resolved. That a committee of three be appointed, to prepare a series of resolutions for presentation to the meeting, to be held as before stated, expressive of the sense which the League entertains of the bereavement the country has sustained, and the duties which are now demanded of the citizens.

The President appointed Messrs. Horace Binney, Jr., Wm. H. Ashhurst, and Charles Gibbons the committee.

On motion adjourned.

GEO. H. BOKER,
Secretary.

MEETING OF THE UNION LEAGUE.

In pursuance of a call for a Special Meeting, made by the Board of Directors, the members of the Union League of Philadelphia, assembled on Monday, April 17, 1865, at 12 M., at Concert Hall.

Mr. McMichael, Vice-President, who occupied the Chair, opened the meeting as follows:

MEMBERS OF THE UNION LEAGUE:—The Board of Directors have invited your presence at this time in order that you may take such action in reference to the events which have recently startled and horrified the country, as in your judgment you shall deem most appropriate. It does not need that

I should say the occasion of your meeting is one of more than ordinary solemnity. Less than three short days ago our entire city, in common with all loyal portions of the Union, was jubilant and resonant, for it was stirred to its utmost depths by the prospect of a great deliverance. After four long and weary years, a war almost illimitable in the extent to which it had spread, and wholly unparalleled in the magnitude of its sacrifices and its sufferings, had, by wisdom in the cabinet and valor on the field, been brought so near a close that all men saw, and rejoiced in, the peaceful end. As was natural under such circumstances, the thunderous report of holiday artillery shook the morning air; bonfires and illuminations lighted the evening sky, flags and streamers danced gaily on every breeze; unaccustomed hands grasped each other in mutual congratulation; eyes of young and old alike beamed with delight, and reverent lips thrilled with grateful thanksgiving to Almighty God for the supreme blessing He had vouchsafed. Foremost among the human agencies by which the grand consummation was realized, all recognized the then President of the United States. To his sagacity, to his skill, to his prudence, to his firmness, to his unflinching adherence to the right, all agreed the final triumph was pre-eminently due, and all believed that by the exercise of the same qualities, he would guide us safely through any new perils we might be called on to encounter. No wonder, therefore, that all hearts turned towards him with sentiments of earnest affection; no wonder that all tongues spoke of him in words of glowing praise; no wonder that wherever his name was mentioned the shoutings of the exultant people were loudest, and the tumultuous demonstrations of patriotic zeal most vehement and prolonged.

What a change do we witness to-day! Gladness is converted into grief; the sable draperies of woe replace the gorgeous emblems of joy; the din of festive preparation has ceased; the sounds of mirth are no longer heard; over all countenances there is diffused an anxious gloom, and sadness and sorrow sit heavily on all bosoms. For alas! alas! alas! our good, our true, our honest, our noble, our dearly cherished President is dead! dead in his prime, and has not left his peer—and

all that was mortal of Abraham Lincoln lies stiff and cold in the White House at Washington, where for so long his genial presence, amid the darkest hours, dispensed a radiant cheerfulness, and, in the most trying straits, reflected a calm content. My friends, among the many awful crimes for which the authors of this rebellion should suffer the most condign punishment here, and for which, unless the testimonies of divine retribution are false, they must make fearful expiation hereafter, there is none that will count against them so terribly as the deep damnation of his taking off—the foul, base and brutal murder of the best citizen, as well as the highest officer of the Republic—the fiendish assassination of the gentlest and kindest being that ever administered public affairs, whose daily life, even under the severe pressure of the most arduous duties and the gravest cares, was a constant illustration of charity and love. Already, indeed, the avenging Nemesis is in swift pursuit on their track. Even now while the miserable wretch, whom their evil teachings and example wrought to the commission of the blackest of all deeds, skulks and shivers in dreaded anticipation of his doom; now, while the arch-traitor whom they lately hailed as chief, like the primal fratricide, is a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth; there ascends unto the judgment-seat, which they made vacant, a sterner ruler, who has been taught by his own wrongs the enormity of their offending, and whose ears are open to hear and his sinews stretched to answer the cry of outraged humanity. And who, in this crisis, shall venture to stay the uplifted arm of justice? Who, contemplating the virtues and the fate of Abraham Lincoln, shall ask for mercy to his slayer? Who, recalling the ravaged fields, the desolated homes, the slaughtered inhabitants of Eastern Tennessee, can hope for forgiveness to the spoilers from Andrew Johnson?

Mr. McMichael then introduced Rev. Phillips Brooks, who offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, the Sovereign Ruler and Commander of the World, in whose hands are power and might, which none are able to withstand, we look up to Thee for comfort and consolation in this dark hour of bereavement. O Lord of life and

light, we invoke Thy presence and favor in our midst. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord! Lord help us, for we are unable to help ourselves; we look up to Thee for strength. We thank Thee for the gift of such a President, we thank Thee that Thou didst put it into the hearts of this people to choose a man, so full of goodness and truth and faithfulness; of patience and serenity and composure; of such wisdom to perceive the truth, and such a steadfastness to do it. We thank Thee for the earnestness with which he laid hold upon the great purposes set before him, and the calm and wise perseverance with which he followed them. We thank Thee that his eye was permitted to see the first fruits of his labor, in the dawn of returning peace. We thank Thee that as we stand by the grave of so great a President, we can feel that he has been a kindly father to all his people, and that to all alike, from the highest in the land to the poor slave, long trodden under foot, he had proved himself so good a brother and friend. We pray not for vengeance, but for justice. Make bare Thine own arm and do the work that must now be done. Leave us not until every vestige of the accursed thing that has wrought us this fearful wrong be done away. O God! Thou hast Thy martyr for Thy cause; assert that cause until slavery be rooted out from all the borders of our land. We pray for the afflicted family of our beloved President. Comfort them in their sore affliction; lift up the light of Thy countenance upon them and give them peace. And we pray for Thy gracious favor to be bestowed on him, who, in Thy providence is raised up to rule over this land. Come Thou to him in wisdom and strength. Give him courage and discretion. Make his staff strong, and let the spirit that was in him who is taken away, fall upon him. We pray for Thy servant, now lying stricken by the hand of the assassin. Bring him up again from the jaws of death and suffer us not to lose the advantage of his wisdom, and patriotism, and zeal for our country's good. We bend our heads before Thee that Thy consolations may come down upon us. Here, in the presence of the memory of Thy faithful servant, we pledge ourselves anew to Thy service. Hold us up, until the great

ends of Thy providence be fulfilled, until all the wrong that has cursed our land be righted, and the iniquity of our fathers be done away. May none of us hesitate or falter, until Thy work is done, and until thine own peace return and rest upon us.

The following Preamble and Resolutions were then read by Horace Binney, Jr., Esq.:

An awful event has stricken and shocked the hearts of the members of the Union League of Philadelphia, and of every true friend to his country. Abraham Lincoln, the twice chosen President of the United States; the unselfish and devoted patriot; the friend of all men; "who never willingly planted a thorn in any man's breast;" while the first rays of the clear sunshine of a consummate victory for the Union were still lighting up his countenance, sitting without a personal guard, which he always rejected, and without a suspicion, which his heart never harbored; in the presence of his wife and family; and surrounded by friends and smiles to partake of a public recreation, for the gratification of a happy community, has been shot to death by the pistol of a dastardly miscreant, conspirator and assassin.

No personal hostility could have prompted the execrable deed. There never was a man, public or private, who gave less occasion for personal rancor against him. No one ever imputed a fault to him as a public man, but the benignity of his heart, which could hardly come up to the demands of vindictive public justice without pain and reluctance. Personally he could not have been an object of malice. But he personated and represented the Union and its loyal people. The assassin represented the spirit of rebellion, and the great conspiracy against the Union and the Government bequeathed to us by our fathers, and vouchsafed to them by the beneficence of heaven; and what secession could not achieve against our arms; the infernal malice of the representative assassin has achieved upon the superintending and sustaining head of the Nation.

It is a blessed memory which survives and will ever survive with the name of this noble and courageous President, that

while he contemplated even this cruel result to himself, he never suffered the fear of it to disturb him in the onward march of his duty.

Hear his own words in his first Presidential message:

"As a private citizen the Executive could not have consented that these institutions shall perish, much less could he in betrayal of so vast and so sacred a trust as these free people had confided to him. He felt that he had no moral right to shrink, nor even *to count the chances of his own life*, in what might follow."

His last inaugural, on the fourth of March, is a sublime manifestation of the righteousness of his moral and political faith which even England acknowledges and respects, and which posterity in this land will never suffer to die.

Never has any event so maddened and then melted the heart of an entire people. The first impulse of every honest heart, was to cry out for the lightning and thunderbolt to smite the wretch to the earth, to consume him to ashes, and to scatter his ashes to the winds as unworthy of the earth. The next and better impulse has been to listen to, and obey the voice from above, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay."

Never has any man, public or private, been so wept and deplored. Never has universal rage been so instantly succeeded by universal tears. The whole people are in tears in the presence of victory, the uplifting of the flag of honor and restoration on the walls of Fort Sumpter, and even on the Resurrection day of our Lord and Saviour, the Prince of Victory and Peace.

Honoring the noble character, the pure principles and the political services of President Lincoln, as the Union League of Philadelphia has always done, we relieve our own hearts, and add their testimony to the tribute of the whole people by adopting the following resolutions:

Resolved, That we honor the name of Abraham Lincoln, our twice elected President, and will ever honor it, as that of a most pure and unselfish patriot, and as a wise-hearted and sagacious leader and administrator of the country, which from a beginning that lay in weakness and unpreparedness for the crisis then upon it, with nothing but his firm heart and

good purpose under God to rely upon, has been brought by the spirit and power of his Administration to a position of preparation and strength, from which it may now look with confidence over the entire domain of the nation, as soon to be reclaimed to Union, universal Freedom and Concord.

Resolved, That we loathe with our whole hearts the pistol and dagger of the assassin, and with scarcely less abhorrence the lash of the slave-driver and the starvation of imprisoned soldiers; and that we should witness with joy and hope such manifestations of sympathy in the South, in detesting and denouncing this execrable crime against humanity and against heaven, as will become the omen and precursor of our fraternal concord in all things, and of the redemption of the old Union from the sin of treason and secession, to order, law, freedom and peace.

Resolved, That no change in the head of this nation by assassination, nor any other event, will shake the Union League of Philadelphia from the firm purpose for which it was instituted, the devotion of life, honor and estate to the defence of the Union against all assaults, and to secure its transmission to our posterity, as our fathers transmitted it to us, without one star extinguished or dimmed, or one bar of its stripes effaced.

Resolved, That we hereby pledge ourselves to Andrew Johnson, who in the Providence of God, is now placed in the chair of the lamented Lincoln, as President of the United States, to sustain him by all our efforts in the same principles and purposes, which his predecessor has now sealed, as a martyr, with his blood.

Resolved, That we call upon our fellow-citizens throughout the land to join with us in reverently invoking for President Johnson, in the performance of the high duties of his office, the protection and support of Almighty God, in whom he has publicly declared his trust, and for our President, our country and ourselves we desire to adopt the closing words of the first message of him whose mantle, we trust has now fallen upon his successor: "Having thus chosen our cause without guile, let us renew our trust in God, and go forward without fear and with manly hearts."

Resolved, That we have received with the most unqualified satisfaction the information that it is the purpose of President Johnson to retain in his own Cabinet the able and faithful Secretaries of Department, whose selection by the sagacity of President Lincoln has been so well vindicated by their successful performance of the arduous duties of their public trusts.

Resolved, That the Union League of Philadelphia hereby tender to the Honorable William H. Seward, Secretary of State, their most earnest and profound sympathy under the unparalleled and cruel outrages inflicted upon him and upon the members of his household; and that we pray Almighty God that he may yet survive, surrounded by an unbroken family, to resume the arduous duties of the post in which he has been retained, and to witness the perfect realization of the measures begun under his late friend and head, for the restoration of the peace and happiness of the nation and for the maintenance of all its rights, both abroad and at home.

Resolved, That a committee of thirteen be appointed whose duty it shall be to transmit a copy of this Preamble and Resolutions, under the signature of the President and Secretary, and under the seal of the Union League of Philadelphia, to his excellency, Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, and to the Heads of the Departments of the Government, and another copy to the widow and children of the late President, with the assurance of our most heartfelt sympathy and condolence with them in their overwhelming affliction.

The resolutions were seconded by Mr. Charles Gibbons, who said:

> "Treason has done its worst! nor steel, nor poison,
> Nor malice domestic, foreign levy—nothing
> Can touch him further."

Slavery has done *its* worst! Its hatred of all that is just and pure, its malevolence, its brutality, its violence, its heartlessness, its treachery, its defiance of every law, human and Divine, are all embodied in that miserable assassin who murdered our good President as he sat, in supposed security, in the capital of our country, by the side of his wife. They are

embodied too in that twin representative who entered a private house at midnight, on a pretended mission of mercy, rushed to the bedside of a sleeping, helpless and almost dying man, plunged his dagger into his throat, and struck down his sons who were watching by his side.

These were not the deeds of two individuals, but representative acts, committed by the right hand and left hand of slavery, which illustrate and typify its soul and its spirit; one and the same spirit which gathered and ruled those secret societies in the North and in the South, where the rebellion was hatched. One and the same spirit that introduced murderous weapons into the halls of Congress, and swaggered, and hectored, and threatened whenever its influence was baffled.

One and the same spirit that struck a United States Senator from his seat by a murderous blow, without warning or provocation, because he would not worship it.

One and the same spirit that organized a band of murderers to take the life of Abraham Lincoln, while on his way to the seat of Government, to assume the duties of the Presidential office, to which the American people had called him.

One and the same spirit that has "poured the sweet milk of concord into hell," and marks its supremacy everywhere with human blood.

One and the same spirit that burned the flesh from the bones of our gallant dead, and fashioned them into trinkets for the necks of its Jezebels.

One and the same spirit that entered the hotels of a neighboring city in the garb of peace, and sought to envelope women and children in the flames which it secretly kindled.

One and the same spirit that massacred our troops at Fort Pillow, after they had surrendered as prisoners of war.

One and the same spirit that starved thousands of our soldiers to death in the prison pens of Georgia and Carolina, where they were crowded—with no covering but the sky, or the storm clouds that burst over them.

One and the same spirit that mined the Libby building when filled with patriots captured in war, and stood with

lighted torch to blow them to eternity, on the entry of our victorious troops into the rebel capitol.

It is a spirit that never looks up to Heaven for what is just, but looks ever in the dust for some worm to tread upon, or some living creature to torture.

It is the spirit that excludes the brave and faithful soldier of the Republic from a Philadelphia railway car if the Creator has colored his complexion too much, but surrenders its seat to the white traitor, who claps his hands with joy over the murdered body of our President.

It is the spirit that exults in the deed of the assassin, and hides itself from popular indignation behind the black weeds of sorrow.

What does the law demand for this foul murder of our honored President—a President of whom it *must* be said that, of those becoming graces—

> "As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
> Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
> Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
> He relished all!"

He relished all—slavery *hated* all, and therefore slavery murdered him! The law is offended; what will satisfy it? It asks no more than the death of that one miserable man, the mere instrument of the murder. But will that satisfy this mourning nation? No! Surely no! What then would your stricken hearts demand! What can satisfy them but the everlasting death of slavery itself, the head and front, the life and soul of treason, rebellion and all their attendant crimes? What should we pray for—what *can* we pray for, but that justice may sweep the land like a whirlwind, leaving behind it no traces of that foul spirit, which has brought this deep sorrow and humiliation upon the nation, but only that blessed and glorious liberty which will satisfy the ordinances of God? Should this be the result of the murder of Abraham Lincoln, and we could hear his voice once more, it would come ringing to us from the courts of Heaven in hallelujahs for the nation's victory over the powers of hell!

The time is coming! Andrew Johnson is in the seat of power. He has walked the pavements of slavery, and sat in

its towers. He knows the spirit with which he has to deal. In the Senate it flattered him, and tempted him, and threatened him; but in vain!

> "Among the faithless, faithful only he;
> Among innumerable false, unmoved,
> Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
> His loyalty he kept—his love, his zeal;
> Nor number nor example with him wrought
> To swerve from truth or change his constant mind,
> Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
> Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained
> Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught;
> And with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd
> On those proud towers, *to swift destruction doom'd.*"

He does not stand alone. He has accepted as his aids the constitutional advisers of President Lincoln. STANTON is with him; that fearless patriot whose name shall ever be honored in the history of a country he has served so well; that friend of liberty who has never quailed before its enemies or faltered in his devotion to its cause. GRANT is with him. SHERMAN is with him. The noble Army of the Republic is with him; the PEOPLE are with him; and above all, He to whom all vengeance belongs, the LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT, is with *him*, and with us!

The Preamble and Resolutions were unanimously adopted by the meeting. After which Mr. Frederick Fraley addressed the meeting, as follows:

I feel a great weight of responsibility in attempting to address this meeting.

The solemn occasion that has brought us together; the deep sense of the great national calamity; the sorrow for a martyred and honored Chief Magistrate, and the grave consequences that must follow such events present topics for our mournful as well as patriotic consideration.

Your eloquent opening, Mr. Chairman, of these proceedings, and the sentiments you have uttered with so much propriety and feeling; the fervent prayer, and earnest and truthful speech of the gentlemen who have followed you, would seem to be all that our heads could ask or our hearts desire for the realization of sorrow or the calls of duty.

And yet, with a deep sense of my own inability to add much, if anything, to the solemnity or instruction of this occasion; I comply with the wish of the Committee, and will state briefly the impressions that this mysterious dispensation of Providence has made on me.

In common with the whole loyal country, I have been rejoicing in our recent national triumphs, and have believed that the war was practically at an end; the reign of union and peace inaugurated, and the country redeemed and purified by the blood and treasure expended in our struggle for law and freedom.

I supposed that the kind-hearted and honorable man who occupied the chief place in the Republic, and had given such assurance to the people of the South, of liberal, just, and merciful treatment for past offences, would be permitted to welcome back the returning prodigals; and that as they had repented of their great sin, and were returning to the home of their fathers, we could put on them the golden ring of Union, and prepare the feast of National and fraternal rejoicing.

But, alas! alas! it has been otherwise ordered; and in the hour of our hope and of our rejoicing, the black hand of death, not of defeat, has been put forward, and we are stayed by the arm of God from carrying our own purposes into effect; but,

> "His purposes are ripening fast,
> Unfolding every hour;
> The *bud* may have a bitter taste,
> But *sweet* will be the flower."

I have sought to read for myself and for my country, a lesson in the deep darkness of this dispensation.

It has impressed me with a new and intense feeling of our duties as citizens of a great and free nation; and I feel it as an awakening call, to a closer and more intelligent study of the genius and principles of our form of government, so that each man that is called on to think, and vote, and act, on the matters of common weal, will not be a blind servant of party, but a pure, enlightened, and patriotic supporter of the right.

By our lamentable departures from the principles of our National fathers; by our restricting rather than enlarging the area of freedom; by our neglect of the rights of the poor

and the oppressed; the degradation of the bondman, and an inordinate appetite for wealth and power; we have sadly marred the heritage they left to us, and now have as sadly suffered the penalty for our sinning.

They left us a flag whose folds were darkened by a shadow, gradually fading away when they passed it into our hands. By the passage of the Act of Congress prohibiting the slave trade after the year 1808, they proclaimed that a power had risen which was to dispel that shadow; but we failed to follow in their footsteps; we bowed down to slavery rather than to extirpate it; to consider it a blessing rather than a curse, and verily we have had our reward.

Degraded by its existence in our own eyes, and dishonored on account of it in almost all lands, we yet clung to it in the mistaken hope that thereby we should preserve the Union.

We gave it compromise on compromise, for the sake of National peace, and sad as the confession may be, we did great evil in the hope that God would wink at it and deem it good.

But, at last, as if wearied with our sin and blindness, He compelled us to put our hands to the plough, and we have been laboring in many deep and long furrows without as yet being able to discern the end of our work. In my judgment we have fallen far short of duty to ourselves and duty to the country.

In this hard struggle for national life, for freedom, for law, we have forgotten that there is a power as potent for victory as the sword. That power is public opinion, it is the searching influence of social intercourse.

We have failed to use this power; we have relied too much on the sword, and too little on that which reaches the heart and the hearthstone, and makes a traitor or a traitorous sympathizer feel that there is a punishment worse, infinitely, than death itself.

To walk the streets as a marked traitor, to be pointed at as a disloyal man, to be shut out from homes and hearts that of old warmed, as it were, into new life when he approached them, these are the sorest and bitterest punishments for treason that can be administered.

We have hitherto failed to use them as we should, but the

time has now come when they are called for by every impulse of honor and patriotism. Let us not falter in their application; let us not by any mawkish sensibilities permit disloyal men to think that their departures from duty are softened down as amiable weaknesses and Christian charity, but let them be marked as with the mark of Cain, if they persist in staying among us, and be accounted as vagabonds and fugitives; or what will be still better, let us compel them to join themselves body and soul to their idols and masters, and finally to share with them the perils as well as the pleasures of rebellion and treason.

Our noble Army, God bless them! Our gallant Navy, God bless them too! have successfully vindicated on the land and on the water the honor of the Nation, and the strength and valor of those armed in a righteous cause. They and we have labored, not to impose shackles and burthens on the people of the South; not even at first to alter one jot or tittle of their peculiar State institutions and policy. From the first we have said to them submit to the law and be safe; submit to the law laid down by our fathers; submit to that which has so long been a pillar of cloud to us by day and a pillar of fire by night; submit to the bonds of the Union and the Constitution.

But they would not listen, the dark and wicked spirits of secession, slavery and State rights, have seized upon them; and for these miserable and lying demons, they sacrificed all that is glorious in the past, all that was hopeful for the future.

If by such malice, wickedness and folly, war desolates their fields and makes blood-marks in their families, who shall pity them?

But, my friends, I think that war has almost done its work, and the time has come for law to step in and do its more appropriate duty.

The traitor is unworthy of a soldier's death; there must be an end of the allowance of belligerent rights; the court and the jury, the public trial, the solemn hall of justice, the verdict, the judgment, and the halter, must now do *their work*, and thus an end be put to this great rebellion.

Public opinion, social ostracism and the law, will be found sufficient for the vindication of the right, and there is no need to set on foot the rule of the mob, or the torch of the incendiary.

When treason and sympathy with treason are treated with honesty to ourselves, with faith in our good cause, and with fidelity to our obligations as men, we shall emerge from the gloom and fear which so often have made us falter, and God will, indeed, be with us, and crown our labors with his blessing.

Members of the Union League, you have done much already for the preservation of the Nation, but your work is not yet finished. The awful crime that has brought us together had its origin in a depraved and dishonest political and social system. It was not so much the work of a single criminal as of a host of offenders; blinded, ignorant offenders, as many no doubt are, but of other offenders whose lives for the past thirty years have been preparing their heads, hearts and hands for the work of iniquity. By the force of circumstances not fully foreseen or appreciated when the League was organized, we have had to take a more active interest in politics than any one anticipated, but we are now called on to do much more.

Questions of the most grave importance must now be settled, probably forever.

The great future of an emancipated race already numbering four millions, is one of these questions. Shall they be men; be clothed with the rights and duties of freemen; or shall they be returned to a worse slavery than that from which we have freed them? Shall they be our political equals, if so, when and how shall this be accomplished? Shall our old notions about race and color shut our eyes to the manifest march of the times, or shall we accept and solve the problem with truth and reason? When I say that we have much of this work in our hands, I state only an accepted fact.

Our great State has always been a battlefield for extreme political opinions, and at all times its vote has for every Presidential term fixed the destiny of the nation.

As it has been in the past so it will be in the future; as

our public virtue has raised the scale of public morals, so have our public faults and ignorance made their mark for evil.

While I feel the great blow which has been struck at the Republic through its Chief Magistrate, I do not despair; the great crime has made a terrible awakening; it has reached the deepest depths of the national heart, and from high and low, rich and poor, there comes to us but one cry. Is it the cry of vengeance? No, my friends, it is not vengeance but justice; it is the cry to mete out to the real authors of the foul deed, the leaders of the rebellion their just punishment. That punishment properly and promptly inflicted, will be mercy to ourselves, will save many from death and suffering, and be acknowledged by the world as most righteously inflicted.

I will not attempt to add to the eulogies already paid to Abraham Lincoln, he deserved them all; they are the appropriate tribute of this hour, when the great work he had done is fresh in our remembrance; when the still greater work he had yet to do is rising before us. Shall it be treated, as it seemed to be his purpose to treat it, with that simplicity, honesty, mercy and long suffering he had so long and so faithfully practiced, or shall it be treated with stern, unrelenting justice. The very breath that was giving utterance to forgiveness, to charity, to brotherly kindness, was checked in its course by the hand of the assassin; the foul deed causing a nation to mourn for the removal of so much that was good; but may we not rejoice that the hands of the conspirators were stayed in the midst of the bloody work, and that we still have preserved to us the rulers duly chosen to perpetuate the Government, and pledged to protect and defend it.

The death of Abraham Lincoln has made a solemn and peculiar impression on me. I have reverently wondered what so signal a dispensation of Providence can mean; it has filled my inner thoughts and awakened feelings in harmony with those of the solemn season that has just closed. The words "It was expedient that one man should die for the people" have been ringing in my ears ever since I heard of the death of the President.

These words, I speak it in fear and trembling, lest I should err, have filled my heart with a glorious hope for the future; they seem to say to me the blood that has thus been shed shall be a passover for this nation. It shall cleanse us from all malice, from all strife, from all hatred, from all self-sufficiency; it shall teach us to be *just* as well as merciful; it shall make our country a glorious kingdom for the manifestation of those sublime teachings of obedience to law, of charity and peace, and good-will to men, which were given to the world by Him who died on Calvary. It will make our land the land of virtue and freedom; the guiding and ruling star of the whole earth!

Mr. John C. Knox, then addressed the meeting in the following remarks:

I am here to-day, Mr. President, to unite with my fellow-members of the Union League, in the solemnities due to this mournful occasion.

A great nation mourns the loss of its Chief Magistrate. The good men of that nation mourn as well the loss of the man Abraham Lincoln.

The heart of the nation was glad. Rejoicing in the assurance that its own existence was safe, the American Republic is appalled by the announcement that its chosen head no longer lives. The country, thank God, is safe, but one of the noblest of its sons is gone forever.

The same spirit which attempted the destruction of the Government, caused the assassination of the President. Abraham Lincoln was assassinated because he was in favor of the unity of this Republic, and because he successfully resisted the attempt to establish here a government whose chief object should be the perpetuation of human slavery.

His devotion to human freedom was at the cost of his life. But his blood has not been shed in vain. The same murderous bullet which sent his pure spirit to its God, sealed forever and forever, the fate of African slavery in this our beloved country. For it there will be neither conditions, terms nor compromises, neither time nor resurrection. It must and will be blotted out at once and forever, and to be remembered

only to be denounced as the favorite institution of the great enemy of mankind, the arch fiend himself.

I know how unnecessary it is for me to speak the praises of our martyred chief. He was an honest, true and pure man. He understood and loved the American people, and the American people knew and loved him. Day by day, was the feeling in his favor strengthened and increased, thereby lessening the number of his political opponents, and giving to the people as a body, confidence in his wisdom to devise, his ability to execute, and his determination to carry out such measures as would promote the greatest good of the greatest number.

Originally elected to the Presidency by a plurality of the popular vote; having to conduct the executive department during the most trying period that the country ever witnessed, he so bore himself in his high office that he was again chosen by the largest numerical majority ever given to a candidate for the Presidency, whose election was contested.

But alas! this great and good man is gone. His name, however, will be a household word with the American people, and his fame will be as dear to future ages as that of the father of his country, our beloved Washington.

May our Heavenly Father protect and preserve the successor of Abraham Lincoln, and may Andrew Johnson in the future be as dear to the hearts of American citizens as the man whose untimely end we this day meet to deplore.

On motion of Mr. John H. Towne, it was

Resolved, That the Board of Directors be requested to devise some proper badge of mourning to be worn by members of the League and their families for the next thirty days.

On motion of Mr. Wm. D. Lewis, the meeting adjourned.

George H. Boker,
Secretary.

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